PUDUKKOTTAI STATE

WAR INFORMATION BUREAU

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LECTURE XLVI.

THE FIFTH COLUMN CRAWLS EASTWARD.

Although the activities of Hitler's Fifth Column experts are a familiar enough subject of conversation, each new example of them is apt to give the public a shock of annoyance and a tendency to reproach the authorities for not having prevented it. The latest of these examples eventuated far nearer to the shores of INDIA than NORWAY, or RUMANIA or PARAGUAY; and the Indian public has shown a tendency to become 'rattled' and querulous over the recent developments in IRAQ, a country of which very few seem to have had the least suspicion concerning its security and loyalty to the Allied cause, until Iraqi levies wantonly opened fire on some British troops in HABBANIYAH, near BAGHDAD.

It is not difficult to understand that in European countries in close proximity to and contact with GERMANY, Quislings were to be found. But that venal traitors of the type of Rashid Ali Gailani should be able to dream of establishing a pro-Axis power in the very centre of a group of Moslem countries owning both friendship with BRITAIN and a horror of Nazism, shows the extent of the German Fifth

Column's ramifications, and their cynical faith in the old maxim that every man has his price—in this case unfortunately a faith partially justified. Happily the incident also shows that the Germans are again psychologically in error, and also that the British authorities were *not* caught unawares as they have been in certain previous affairs—but of this more anon.

Blind (as the German race are so prone to be in matters psychological) to the fundamental antogonism of the Moslem ideology to their own totalitarian doctrines, the Axis powers have their eye on the oil-fields in IRAN and IRAQ. They also long to upset the harmony existing between the Moslem countries from EGYPT to TURKEY and from PALESTINE to INDIA with BRITAIN and British aims. By suborning some Iraqi officers, and by concentrated anti-British propaganda in the bazaars of BASRA and BAGHDAD and MOSUL, they aim at presenting the world with the picture of grasping British imperialists making war on a friendly Moslem country. It may not come off, they think—in fact it has not come off, because, as Mr. Winston Churchill said in the Commons, Rashid Ali's rebellion went off at half-cock—but any embroilment of Moslem sentiment to the detriment of the British, is worth the candle. And so it is that a large number of Iraqi soldiers here lost their lives, and the country's airforce has been reduced to almost nil!

Nevertheless, BRITAIN is NOT fighting a Moslem power. She has acted very strictly in accordance with her treaty rights (vide our "Sidelights" in this column week before last), in order to maintain communication between her two Moslem Allies, TURKEY and EGYPT. She has been wantonly attacked by a gang of Quislings in Axis pay, who are engaged in trying to sell Moslem countries in the East, to GERMANY.

The action of Rashid Ali Gailani in ordering Iraqi troops to fire on Imperial forces at HABBANIYAH is one of the grossest acts of political ingratitude on record. IRAQ never enjoyed the semblance of independence since the time of Nebuchadnezzar until its organisation as a modern political entity under British statemanship within the last twenty years. British officers trained its army, British enterprise developed its water and oil resources, with all the trade and prosperity these have brought to the country, and British diplomacy nursed and protected

it while it was still too weak to defend itself. A month or two ago we deliberately sent troops there to safeguard a peaceful country against any possible Axis threat. And now this corrupt adventurer, who with the small military clique surrounding him prefers to take his orders—and his price—from BERLIN, bites the hand that created and nurtured his country. No wonder that the Moslem world stands aghast. TURKEY and IRAN and EGYPT all denounce him ; many an important desert Sheikh vows vengeance, and the opinion of South MESOPOTAMIA is strongly hostile.

But the lesson is there for us to read. We sent troops to BASRA in order to keep open communications with our Moslem allies in EGYPT, TURKEY and TRANSJORDANIA and to protect their rear. Rashid Ali's rebellion merely shows how necessary and timely this action was, especially in view of the recent French betrayal of their quondam allies over the Syrian aerodromes. The 'tourists' and 'technicians' and 'commercials' from BERLIN who singly, or in small parties, trickle continually into the ports and industrial centres and social capitals of every unwatchful neutral country, and corrupt the ignorant with their money, the disgruntled with their doctrine, and the ambitious with their promises (and often with their attractive women !), can and do work immeasurable harm even among peoples who 'have eaten our salt' Moslems in INDIA, and the world over, to whom this phrase is so much more than a figure of speech, will surely take to heart the blot that a violent and corrupt military clique have laid upon their escutcheon in IRAQ.

WEEKLY WAR SUMMARY.

22—5—41 to 28—5—41.

BY far the most outstanding event of the week has been the sinking of the *Bismarck*. She was Germany's biggest battleship (35,000 tons) and was launched in November last. Great things were expected of her in the way of ship-sinking and similar achievements and when she went and sank the *Hood*, it looked as though the high hopes entertained of her would be justified. That, however, was reckoning without the

host. The British Navy was stung to the quick and they determined to avenge the loss of the *Hood*. And they did it, neatly, efficiently, in double quick time. It was a marvel of co-ordinated action, well-timed, and magnificently carried out. It was not an easy job either. Having sunk the *Hood*, the offender turned tail and went off to take further toll of British shipping in Atlantic waters but the Home fleet took up the chase and maintained it without slackening though frequently thrown off the trail by sleet, fog and mist. Ultimately they came to grips with her on Tuesday morning; a torpedo from the *Ark Royal* caught her amid ships and that was beginning of the end of her. She rolled, made two complete circles and the rest of the fleet pitched into her and sent her down to the bottom of the sea.

A gallant action. It showed, if it needed showing, that the British Navy is unbeaten and unbeatable. That is the supreme lesson of this war to the extent to which it has been fought. Then it was the scuttling of the *Graf Spee* and the sinking of the *Konigsburg* and other raiders, now it is the sinking of the *Bismarck*, GERMANY's prize battleship. It is a mighty big job of work which is cast on the Navy, nothing less than the policing of the seven seas and, in spite of the magnitude of the task, the British sea-dog tenacity is still there, ready to assert itself when the need should arise.

The *Hood* was a magnificent ship with a magnificent crew and she went gamely. It is sad to lose her but BRITAIN's cruiser strength is much higher than what the Axis can show. The Italian fleet has been crippled, her cruisers of the Littorio class are out of gear (the British Navy saw to that long ago), the German cruisers, the *Gneisnau* and the *Scharnhorst* are hiding in BREST harbour, where they are receiving an almost nightly hammering at the hands of the R. A. F. And if we should only account for the *Bismarck's* twin-battleship, the *Tirpitz*, we shall have gone a long way in wiping out the German menace to our shipping.

This is very heartening, indeed. For, as Mr. Roosevelt has reminded us, the rate of destruction latterly has been much higher than the rate of replacement. So our immediate concern is to bring out a favourable balance; a few more sinkings will come in useful; and when the Americans 'go into it bald-headed' as they now seem determined to do, the German menace in this regard will become a laughing matter.

Mr. Roosevelt's 'fireside chat'.

Mr. Roosevelt's latest pronouncement, in declaring an unlimited national emergency and defining American policy, though a diplomatic pronouncement of the first magnitude, has all the sincerity and straightforwardness of a heart-to-heart talk. He does not mean to stand any nonsense and he is not going to keep the democracies waiting everlastingly He means to bring in AMERICA before it is too late, not at the eleventh hour as happened last time. Hitlerism is going to be resited at all costs, and, to this end, supplies to BRITAIN are going to be speeded up. Every possible assistance from the point of view of naval and military necessity is going to be given, so to speak, with both hands. Mark his words. "This can be done, it must be done and it will be done." One can almost see the set of Mr. Roosevelt's jaw as he spoke these heartening words.

Mr. Roosevelt's words have a deeper significance than what belongs to a promise of help. It is valuable as an authoritative *exposé* of the determining factor in the war. GERMANY's military successes leave him cold: the threats of Admiral Raeder and the egregious Dr. Goebbels leave him cold. The *Bismarck*, it is said, was on her way to stage a few spectacular sinkings of British merchantmen to put the fear of the Nazi in the American President's mind but the scheme went 'a-gley' and if omens mean anything the sinking of the *Bismarck* on the eve of Mr. Roosevelt's epoch-making pronouncement is bound to give Hitler and his hordes 'the creeps'.

Mr. Roosevelt had no doubts in his own mind that it is sea-strength which is going to decide the issue in this war. And he calls delighted attention to ENGLAND's epic resistance and CHINA's doggedness in defending herself. Here are two facts, separated in space, by the breadth of two Continents, which are the complicating spokes in Hitler's wheel. The lesson which he presses home is that the Nazis will have to defeat BRITAIN before they can hope to dominate the world and before they can defeat BRITAIN they will have to wrest the mastery of the seas from her. Single-handed, it is quite possible, BRITAIN may find it a tough job to maintain her naval supremacy but with American assistance forthcoming in the immediate future, she would have no difficulty in putting the Axis fleet in its place.

The value of the speech, therefore, is not merely in its revelation of the true position but in its justification of those who have declined to be depressed by British military reverses and in its tonic effect on those faint hearts who droop and decline at irrelevant disaster.

Crete.—Up to the moment of going to press, things are not going too badly in CRETE. The Germans have dug themseves in securely round about MALEMI and have been hurling themselves into fray, not counting the cost in men and material. The odds against the British are terrific but they are standing up to the blast. Aided by almost unremitting dive-bombing, parachute landings have been taking place but the British have taken a fearful toll of the attackers. The Cretan beaches, it seems, are littered with damaged enemy aircraft. Reinforcements are being landed, one hopes, in sufficient numbers to drive the enemy back. At certain points, British troops have had to withdraw but that by itself will not make the position precarious. If reinforcements are rushed as they are being done, we may soon get the upper hand. Anyway, the British defence is epic in character, If the Greek resistance to the Nazi hordes recalled the days of Leonidas, British bravery is reminiscent of the Charge of the Light Brigade.

CRETE, after all, militarily, can be only a minor episode. Its conquest will not do Hitler good; it will only cause him needless worry by necessitating a dispersal of his troops. In his hands, it may have a nuisance value, for he can harry our Mediterranean shipping and his airmen can make a few bombing excursions to ALEXANDRIA (at their risk, of course). But the longer the British are able to hold it, the longer will be the time they will get to prepare for fighting in NORTH AFRICA and ASIA.

Iraq.—The situation in IRAQ is satisfactory. Rashid Ali has gambled and lost. His Nazi supporters seem to throw the blame on him for having mistimed his rebellion while Rashid Ali's grouse against the Nazis is that their help was meagre and slow in materialising. Anyway between them they have made a mess of the business and Rashid Ali has had to flee the country. The closing of the SYRIA-IRAQ frontiers was another blow to the rebels, Muslim opinion has definitely ranged itself against Rashid Ali and is unanimous in condemning his mad adventure. The regent of IRAQ, the Emir Abdul Illah, has come back and resumed the reins of Government and is determined to restore

order and put an end to the machinations of the Axis powers. All is quiet round and about BASRA and the British troops have marched up country and have taken up a position between FALLUJAH and BAGHDAD. The rebels have tried to cut off communications but their resistance is definitely waning.

Abyssinia.—With the fall of AMBA ALAGI and the surrender of the Duke of Aosta last week, the Abyssinian campaign may be said to have reached its end. What remains to be done is general mopping up. The few remaining enemy positions have been bombed and machine-gunned by our aircraft. We have captured enormous quantities of stores and military material. The number of prisoners taken since AMBA ALAGI is over 20,000.

The Western Desert.—The Nazis are attempting a new push across the Egyptian frontier. They have succeeded in getting possession of SOLLUM and four German armoured columns are attempting to advance into EGYPT but are meeting with a most determined resistance. Though numerically superior, the enemy is being successfully held at bay by British troops.

The Mediterranean fleet has not been inactive. They have torpedoed four big enemy ships including an 18,000-ton liner. These were carrying reinforcements to the enemy in LIBYA. The British blockade is very intense. The following figures tell their own tale.

Total tonnage of German and Italian ships sunk, scuttled or captured since the war began to the middle of May—2,873,000. Of these, German ships captured number 61; tonnage, 274,000. German ships sunk or scuttled 285; tonnage, 149,000. To the above number must be added another 38 ships of a total tonnage of 67,000 belonging to other countries which had been serving German ends.

R. A. F. Raids over ENEMY and ENEMY-occupied Territories.

Date.	Targets.	R. A. F. losses.	Enemy aircraft losses and results of air bombardment.
19—5—41. (Monday.)			
	IRAQ.		
	The Aerodrome at MOSUL ...	...	Damaged.
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	Enemy motor transport and mechanised units in the Western Desert.	...	Many vehicles burnt out and others damaged.
	BENGHAZI ...	3 planes.	Buildings damaged.
	GREECE.		
	The German-occupied Aerodromes in GREECE.	...	...
	The Aerodromes at HASSANI and ELEUSIS.	...	Buildings hit. Fires started.
20—5—41. (Tuesday.)			
	IRAQ.		
	The Rashid Aerodrome near BAGHDAD.	...	...
	GREECE.		
	Aircraft on the ground at ELEUSIS ...	...	Fires started.
	The Aerodromes at MENIDI, MALAOI and TOPOLIA.	...	Expolisions and fires started.
	SYRIA.		
	Aircraft on the ground at PALMYRA and DAMASCUS.	...	2 troop-carriers burnt out. Many planes damaged.
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	Offensive patrols over CYRENAICA...	...	...
	The Aerodrome at MECHELLI ...	...	2 planes.
	Motor Transport in the EL GAZALA and TOBRUK Areas.	...	...

Date.	Targets.	R. A. F. losses.	Enemy aircraft losses and results of air bombardment.
21—5—41.	**(Wednesday.)**		
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.		
	DAY :—		
	The Naval Base at HELIGOLAND ...	1 plane.	Great havoc done. 1 plane.
	A power station and an oil refinery near BETHUNE (FRANCE).	...	Set on fire.
	Aerial combats over Occupied FRANCE.	7 planes.	6 planes.
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	Motor transport convoys in the CAPUZZO.	...	Many lorries damaged.
	A camp and gun positions in CAPUZZO	...	...
	BARCE ...	...	Damaged.
	Enemy troops on the road near CHELGA.	...	Machine-gunned.
22—5—41.	**(Thursday).**		
	IRAQ.		
	Enemy positions and tanks near FALLUJA.	...	Lorries and tanks captured.
	A petrol dump to the north of BAGHDAD.	...	Set on fire; 3 planes damaged.
	CRETE.		
	The Aerodrome at MALEMI ...	...	...
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	The harbour and shipping at BENGHAZI.	...	Very heavy damage. Explosions started.
23—5—41.	**(Friday.)**		
	GERMANY and GERMAN-occupied EUROPE.		
	COLOGNE	No loss.	Damaged.
	Aerodromes and ports in occupied countries.		
	A large ship off the DUTCH coast ...		Sunk.
	An oil tanker off the West-coast of FRANCE.		
	IRAQ.		
	Reconnaissance over Rebel IRAQ ...	...	.....

Date.	Targets.	R. A. F. losses.	Enemy aircraft losses and results of air bombardment.
23—5—41.	**(Friday)**—*cont.*		
	CRETE.		
	The Aerodrome, the aircraft on the ground and the beach at MALEMI.	...	Many planes completely destroyed and many others damaged.
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	Enemy troop concentrations and motor transport in Central ABYSSINIA.	...	Heavy loss.
	The harbour and shipping at BENGHAZI.	...	Very heavy damage.
24—5—41.	**(Saturday.)**		
	IRAQ.		
	Enemy troops, trenches and roads at QURMETALI.	...	......
	A motor transport in the HABBANIYAH area.	...	......
	SYRIA.		
	'Pamphlet raid' all over SYRIA ...	...	......
	GERMAN air-craft at ALEPPO aerodrome.	...	1 plane destroyed; many damaged. Fires and explosions started.
	CRETE.		
	The Aerodrome at MALEMI ...	...	1 plane; big fires started.
	German transport - aircraft landing troops in MALEMI area.	1 plane.	......
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	Italian troops and fort at GOANG ... **Italian positions and transport** at various points in ABYSSINIA. **Anti-aircraft batteries** on the river OMO.	No loss.	Heavy casualties. Many vehicles damaged.

Date.	Targets.	R. A. F. losses.	Enemy aircraft losses and results of air bombardment.
25—5—41. (Sunday.)			
	NORTH SEA.		
	Enemy ships in the North SEA ...	1 plane.	Two ships sunk.
	IRAQ.		
	Military objectives in RAMADI area ...	...	Several fires started.
	Aircraft at MOSUL aerodrome and BAQUBA.	...	Many damaged. 2 planes set on fire.
	SYRIA.		
	The aerodrome at PALANGRA ...	...	Damaged.
	CRETE.		
	Enemy positions and aircraft in CRETE		24 planes.
	The aerodrome and the adjacent fields at MALEMI.	...	...
	Troops carriers near SUDA BAY ...	...	...
	ITALIAN AFRICA.		
	Enemy defences and motor transport near OMO river.	...	Vehicles destroyed.

ENEMY Raids over BRITAIN and BRITISH Territories.

Date.	Targets.	Enemy aircraft losses.	R. A. F. losses and results of air bombardment.
20—5—41. (Tuesday.)			
	BRITAIN.		
NIGHT :—			
	A few points in East ANGLIA and South WALES	...	Slight damage and a few casualties.
	CRETE.		
	Aerodromes in CRETE ...	...	No damage.
	A hospital in CANEA ...	...	Some casualties to hospital staff.
	MEDITERRANEAN.		
	MALTA ...	...	No damage.

Date.	Targets.	Enemy aircraft losses.	R. A. F. losses and results of air bombardment.
21—5—41. (Wednesday.)			
	BRITAIN.		
	No air activity at all.		
	IRAQ (British).		
	The British positions at FALLUJA ...	...	Driven away.
	The aerodrome at HABBANIYAH ...	...	2 planes damaged.
22—5—41. (Thursday.)			
	BRITAIN.		
DAY :—			
	A SUSSEX **village** ...	1 plane.	No damages or casualties.
	The ENGLISH CHANNEL ...	1 plane.	...
NIGHT :—			
	No raid anywhere.		
	CRETE.		
	Dive-bombing British troops ...		Many shot down.
23—5—41. (Friday.)			
	BRITAIN.		
NIGHT :—			
	A single area in the MIDLANDS ...	...	Slight damage and casualties.
	IRAQ.		
	The aerodrome at HABBANIYAH ...	...	Some damage to buildings.
	MEDITERRANEAN.		
	Shipping in the MEDITERRANEAN ...	3 planes.	No damage.
	SUEZ Canal area ...	...	No damage or casualties.
24—5—41. (Saturday.)			
	BRITAIN.		
DAY :—			
	The Coast of East ANGLIA ...	...	A few casualties and slight damage.
NIGHT :—			
	One place in the West of ENGLAND.	...	(A few casualties and slight damage — bracketed with the above)

Date.	Targets.	Enemy aircraft losses.	R. A. F. losses and results of air bombardment.
25—5—41. (Sunday.)			
	BRITAIN.		
	No air activity at all ...	...	...
	IRAQ.		
	The Cantonement at HABBANIYAH ...	...	Very slight damage.
	CRETE.		
	The towns of CANEA, RETHYMNO and HERAKLION.	...	Civilian casualties only slight.
	MEDITERRANEAN.		
	MALTA ...	Many planes damaged.	Slight damage.
26—5—41. (Monday.)			
	BRITAIN.		
	DAY :—		
	A town on the East coast ...	...	Slight damage.
	Balloon barrage at Dover ENGLISH CHANNEL.	1 plane.	...
	NIGHT :—		
	South and East ANGLIA ...	...	Slight damage.
	IRAQ.		
	R. A. F. Aerodrome at HABBANIYAH.	...	...
	CRETE.		
	Many towns in CRETE ...	...	...

SIDE LIGHTS.

CIRCUMSPICE ! There are two kinds of attitude in INDIA these days which require dealing with, the kind that refuses to be stirred or even interested by the far-reaching events in the neighbouring Continent, and the kind that panics at every victory and every nearer move of the enemy. For the benefit of both let us take a look round.

EGYPT and the Suez Canal appear to be the crux of the matter and in one way it seems arguable that Rashid Ali has sold the democratic front in the East and opened a road for the German invasion of INDIA. Against this we can set the facts that :—

(a) The present IRAQ 'Government' has not been recognised by any Islamic Power.

(b) Since IRAQ is the aggressor and the present 'Government' unconstitutional, there is no question of the 'mutual assistance' clause of the Saadabad Pact being invoked.

(c) Most Moslems seem to realise that there is certainly Axis money behind the revolt, and that therefore a promising Moslem State must be reduced to the condition of, say, RUMANIA, if the rebellion is successful.

To turn to EGYPT'S chances, remember that Imperial troops saved her last cold weather from the Italians, and if the spell of General Wavell's successes has been broken by the German recapture of the initiative in LIBYA, there are increasing signs of the weakening of their threat to EGYPT in the apparent change of tactics in the past ten days. Instead of pressing on with their offensive, they have been so badly hung up by the TOBRUK defence and are so apprehensive of the power of the reinforced Imperial Army of the Nile that most of the news concerns the digging-in operations of the Germans round SOLLUM and the wired borderline between LIBYA and EGYPT.

Judging by these two theatres of war alone, the rejuvenated 'Pincer Movement' seems to be working none too smoothly, and that the people who preen themselves that the Western bastion of INDIA, namely EGYPT, is secure and that, therefore, they need not worry, have some grounds for complacency.

BUT ... is the defence of INDIA from the west to be found in EGYPT alone? Distance, seas, deserts and other natural barriers no longer prevent, even if they hamper, the advance of aeroplanes, and fast armoured fighting vehicles. EGYPT may be well defended, **but there are other routes to India these days.** They both lead from the BALKANS—always supposing that RUSSIA remains neutral. They are :—

BALKANS - TURKEY - IRAQ - IRAN - AFGHANISTAN

and BALKANS - SYRIA - IRAQ - IRAN and AFGHANISTAN.

Of these, I think the second the more likely line. True, TURKEY is now isolated from British support, but, if invaded, would almost certainly fight. There remains the other route and though Rashid Ali's rebellion is no great shake at the moment, we have all read recently of the permeation of

INDIA's western neighbours' territories—IRAQ, IRAN, and AFGHANISTAN, by the familair 'tourist' and 'technician' fifth-columnists, and the influx of Axis money that always accompanies them. So watch the SYRIA and IRAQ developments, and make up your minds that **there is as much danger to INDIA** through these two States as there ever was through EGYPT, and that though the British Government are very keenly aware of all that is going on there, and things do not look too hopeful for the enemy at the moment, there is only one attitude for every Indian to adopt and that is to assist in every possible way to see that this country helps BRITAIN to take the most resolute and far-reaching action in the Land of the Two Rivers.

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CRETE. It may be that these notes, and yet another week's instalment of them will be in print before we know the outcome of the fantastic struggle taking place on the northern shores of this historic Mediterranean island. The Germans can't actually *need* CRETE; with their Aegean bases in GREECE, only a couple of hundred miles away, and in 'occupied' small islands considerably nearer, plus the DODECANESE, they would have a fine diving board for their plunge into ASIA MINOR. The rub, with them, is that some one else has got CRETE, namely the Imperial troops and the remnants of the Greek armies and Government, and while that is the case, the proverbial 'thorn in the side' pricks them acutely. They have decided that to bring their plans to fruition, they MUST turn us out of the island, while Mr. Churchill has made it clear in his doughty fashion that we haven't the least intention of leaving. Hence the possibility of a three-dimensional campaign that may cost more lives than any other 'battle' of the war so far.

H. G. Well's highest flights of fancy could, said the Premier, hardly cope with this nightmarish struggle. The air full of aircraft of every size, shape and pace—bombers, troop-carriers, fighters, gliders and dive-bombers; the sea swarming with fishing smacks, caiques, feluccas, barges, scattering and dashing for the sounds and shallows of scattered islets directly the searchlights of the Navy pick them up; destroyers and submarines and smoke-screens, the thunder of mighty guns and the glare of burning hulls; and on the coast of northern CRETE, soundless aircraft slipping down to earth, hundreds of parachutes breaking from them just before they bump to the ground, covered from the air by flight after flight of the roaring dive-bombers trying to make the defenders 'keep their heads down', and the scattered bodies of air-borne troops struggling to collect their arms and congregate in some convenient stronghold with the alternative of sneaking off in small groups to the tracks and fastnesses of a mountainous island, hunted by the natives tall, fierce, handsome men—and women—with long knives and a deadly hatred. Horrible and magnificent—and, as Mr. Churchill reminded us,—neither side can retire! It is a maxim of

modern war—or it should be—that if you think an objective important enough, no sacrifice must be thought too great to achieve that objective. It looks as if the Germans reason thus, but, in this case, one wonders what the feelings of their people will be when the mortality bill for CRETE is presented !

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STICK TO THE LONG VIEW! With all these sensations in the daily bulletins it is natural that many people "cannot see the wood for the trees". The wood we are threading our way through is War Till Final Victory, and dominating this wood are some great growths of timber which are apt to be obscured by smaller, nearer and more vivid trees such as CYRENAICA, the BALKANS, CRETE and IRAQ, namely the Battle of the Atlantic, and Air Supremacy in Western EUROPE.

Dropping a somewhat difficult metaphor, examine for a moment these fundamental aspects of the war :—

(i) The original German plan was undoubtedly a simultaneous attack on BRITAIN by GERMANY, and on EGYPT and SUEZ by the Italians. This plan has been very badly hung up, and BRITAIN and AMERICA have gained most vital time for preparations.

(ii) The war is three-dimensional. The outcome will depend on the extent to which either combatant can achieve supremacy in two out of three of these dimensions.

Last autumn, GERMANY gained land superiority, but failed to gain it in the air where she has been steadily losing ground.

BRITAIN has always had superiority at sea, and steadily adds to it. Very shortly she will also have numerical as well as moral superiority in the air as well. When she is thus on top in two of the three dimensions, she will be in a position to undertake the defeat of the German land power.

(iii) Further German land conquests may be of immediate benefit in economics and prestige to the enemy, but as these conquests grow, so also does the dissipation of their troops, their Gestapo and their administrative officials. Ultimately German conquests will reach their maximum size and minimum density. British sea and air power, at their height, will only have an inflated land empire to strangle and penetrate.

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BALKAN SUMMARY. A friend of mine given to epigrams recently dubbed our campaign in the southern BALKANS as "sending a firing-party to the funeral of GREECE." Since we lost CYRENAICA to do it, we failed to save our Ally (territorially) and had to relinquish our

foothold on the mainland of the Continent, the *mot* has its point. But that is all. Here is the rest of the picture.

(*a*) To have abandoned that very gallant people would have been a political and moral error of the first order. To have decided thus we should have chosen the far greater of the two evils before us.

(*b*) Militarily we have again displayed two vital war potentials. First, we have shown—as we did at DUNKIRK—that we can withdraw a very large proportion of large land forces from untenable positions because we have command of the sea. Second, the Imperial troops once more gave the Germans such a hammering that both our men individually and the world itself, realises that man for man we are better soldiers than the enemy. The Germans themselves know that given equal numbers and equal equipment, there can be only one result when they come up against the armies of Liberty.

(*c*) Even if there are neutral countries who wag their heads and say, "Yes, but victory is victory and defeat is defeat", Mr. Winston Churchill is not the only man who is satisfied that the result of the BALKAN campaign is a "net gain for Britain". Elsewhere in this number you will find how the watching Scandinavian countries regard recent history. Here, again, is the opinion of the famous American columnist, Major Eliot, in the "*Herald Tribune*" in the last days of April.

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AMERICAN VIEW. "Much that has taken place," he writes, "in the BALKANS is a net gain for BRITAIN. Hitler after all, much against his will, has been compelled to fight in that region under circumstances not selected by him.

"The German High Command did not wish to fight in the South-East at all. It knows as well as anyone that the decisive area in this war is the BRITISH ISLES and its approach waters.

"The BALKAN campaign diverted man power, munitions and air power from the decisive area and cut sharply at the decisive period of time. It has dislocated the German time-table and enabled BRITAIN to improve her defences, and got AMERICA through the travail of the Lease and Lend discussion and the first stages of production. It has presented the Germans with a new and serious police problem covering such a vast area. It has seriously impaired, if it has not destroyed, some of GERMANY's best sources of supply of minerals and foodstuffs. It has brought GERMANY's ally, ITALY to the brink of collapse and compelled GERMANY to waste further time, effort, and resources in propping up a partner who is now a burden rather than a help, just as AUSTRIA and HUNGARY became in the last war."

IMPORTANCE OF NAVAL CO-OPERATION TO THE ARMY.

VALUE OF ATTACKS ON ENEMY SEA-BORNE SUPPLIES.

HOW INDIAN AND DOMINION FLEETS HELP.

by

H. C. Forraby (In a recent B. B. C. talk).

Quite a number of people have been saying for the last few days, "Nice little job of work that, by the Navy, mopping up the Italian convoy." It certainly was, and it came at a time when we needed a little bit of cheering news, as an offset to what the official spokesmen have been calling a "serious situation" during the week.

But the destruction of that one convoy does not stand by itself, as a solitary example of our interference with the supplies and reinforcement of the enemy armies in North Africa, for through the past four months the Admiralty has been issuing brief bulletins recording that one or other of our submarines had attacked and sunk an enemy supply ship or perhaps two ships in the Mediterranean.

Those brief announcements did not attract very much attention perhaps amongst the lay public. In these days when merchant shipping losses run into hundreds of thousands of tons a month, the destruction of one ship does not have quite such a dramatic effect on the public mind as it had in the first week or two of the war, but those who follow the war at sea closely and keep records of all these apparently isolated incidents realize that we have made the sea route between Italy and Tripoli very unsafe for enemy supplies.

When you tot up all the tonnage mentioned in these separate Admiralty bulletins, you find that during the time the Germans were moving their forces into North Africa, our submarines sank at least 109,000 tons of shipping on that route, and please note that qualification "at least".

That is the destruction by submarines alone. There has been much air activity also, the full results of which we do not know, and it must not be forgotten that we have proclaimed these waters a dangerous area owing to mines. That does not mean that the whole area is one vast minefield, but it does mean that at any moment ships moving there might come across a newly laid group, and it is quite possible that more than one transport has had to be entered in the German records as "Sunk without trace". Neither they nor we know anything more than that the ship disappeared. The 109,000 tons of enemy shipping that our submarines have sunk represent considerable carrying capacity.

That was a very useful job of co-operation by our submarines. We do not know yet why there was no

surface attack on the enemy supply line during the early part of the year, but in view of the shortage of warships for all the myriad jobs that have to be done, it may well be that there was nothing that could be spared from other work just then.

The Admiralty bulletins announcing small actions, small successes, here, there and everywhere show how widespread our naval forces are.

Take the position in the Red Sea, in recent months; we knew that the Italians had seven destroyers and a couple of torpedo boats as well as half a dozen submarines, working out of the ports in Eritrea and Somaliland. They were a constant menace to the vital supply lines of General Wavell's army—supply lines along which were passing munitions and stores from the factories and fields of Australia, New Zealand and India.

The convoy routes through the Red Sea past the Italian naval bases there had to be covered by naval forces of the Empire, and the official bulletins have shown what a big part has been played in that work by ships of the Royal Indian Navy, the Royal Australian Navy, and the New Zealand division, as well as by the ships of the British East Indian Squadron.

The work of containing that small Italian force in the Red Sea has absorbed a lot of our naval energy since last June, though perhaps few people ever gave much thought to that aspect of the war.

Now, with the collapse of Italian resistance in East Africa and the capture by us of their ports, much of the effort we have had to devote to the protection of the Red Sea convoys can be diverted to other tasks.

That is one of the notable things about sea power, its elasticity. Naval strength can so rapidly be transferred from one theatre of war to another by any nation that has command of the sea.

I was on board a British cruiser recently which in twelve months had seen service in the Indian ocean, in the Arctic circle, away in the Western Atlantic, and had had one hectic and hurried rush into the Mediterranean also, where she had had the luck to get into action a bit, at a great distance, with the Italian main body.

And that record is by no means unique in the navy. The battleship *Warspite* has been mentioned several times in Admiralty communiqués, fighting at one time off the extreme north coast of Norway, and another in the Eastern Mediterranean, and no doubt she has been part of the force with which Admiral Cunningham has been supporting our small land force on the Egyptian frontier.

Naval co-operation has again been helpful there in bombarding enemy shore positions, and that word co-operation means a great deal more in this war than it did in the last, because since then our naval, military and air forces leaders have had a chance to work together in studying the main problems that arise when the three different arms have to work together.

In the past many of our joint expeditions have failed, because the naval men did not know what were the difficulties of the army, and the army men did not know what were the limitations within which the ships could work.

Plans had to be made up, on the spur of the moment very often, and though the British people like to think of themselves as great hands at improvising—we used to call it "muddling through"—improvising is not a good way of waging war against highly organised forces like those of Germany.

In the last dozen years or so, promising officers of all three services, have been detailed for a year's course of study together at the newly instituted Imperial Defence College.

Moreover some of the Senior Civil Servants concerned with the supply of stores and munitions to these services have gone through this course with the officers, because it is no use having perfect strategic and practical plans if your supply service does not function, or your supply men do not know why certain things have to be done.

The men who are at the head of our fighting fleets to-day have all taken this special course of study alongside the army and air force officers with whom they have to co-operate. They all know each other well and they have all discussed together in lecture rooms and mess, the way each arm can best work on an agreed plan in the other's movements.

That is a good deal better than improvising, and we have seen the results in the successes that marked the Mediterranean campaign last winter. The effect of this triangular co-operation will be seen still better when we come to the really big conjoint operation—the invasion of Hitler-ridden Europe, which will be the culminating effort of this war, when indeed all three arms will have to work as one.

We sometimes forget that the war must be regarded as a whole, that there is no such thing really as a naval war, or a land war, or an air war; there are naval operations and land operations, and air operations, but they are all linked strategically into the thing that we call war, and it is Britain's possession of command of the sea which makes possible for us the carrying out of conjoint operations anywhere.

STRATEGICUS ON BRITISH WITHDRAWAL FROM GREECE.

"THREE UNCHALLENGEABLE CONCLUSIONS."

WHERE GERMAN ARMY'S WEAKNESS LIES.

HOW EMBARKATION WAS ACHIEVED.

EVENTS are showing that Germany has certain important failings for a world conqueror. The most obvious of these is her character as a bad finisher, and this tends to support the generalisation that she can win battles but no wars.

The withdrawal of the British forces from Greece is a case in point. This operation has not been completed as I write, but already it is known that 80 per cent of the Commonwealth troops landed in Greece have been safely withdrawn. This may be taken as a crucial test.

The Germans have been trying for over a fortnight to crush or capture the British forces. The force they concentrated against Yugoslavia, Greece and the British contingent has been put at 25 divisions in Bulgaria alone. The total must have been much larger and has been estimated at about 50 divisions including, perhaps, 12 armoured units. This force was supported by a great concentration of aeroplanes, and as first the Yugoslav army and then the Epirus army went out of the fight, the German force was able to concentrate more and more densely against the small British contingent and the remainder of the Greek army. Reliable correspondents have indeed said that the German difficulty towards the end was to bring their full force to bear against the Allied line. It was too great for the short front occupied by the dwindling Allied army.

CONDITIONS DURING WITHDRAWAL.

Thus the conditions under which the withdrawal was carried out were a dwindling force, a constantly deteriorating position and constantly increasing pressure. Correspondents have spoken in particular of the growing number of the *Luftwaffe* and the diminishing number of R. A. F. planes. This is not entirely accurate. The number of German aeroplanes did not increase, but the number concentrated against the small Allied force grew steadily. The R. A. F., on the other hand, could not operate towards the end because the aerodromes were then in German hands.

It is clear that the Germans wished above all things to crush or capture the British forces. They have not on this occasion been so lavish with their boasts to have encircled or destroyed the British as they were at Dunkirk,

because then in spite of every effort they could not prevent a large proportion of the troops from escaping. On this occasion they must have tried even harder to destroy the small force which had inflicted such heavy loss upon them. Again they failed.

"MOST DIFFICULT OPERATION".

It is a commonplace of text books that embarkation under pressure of a hostile army is the most difficult operation in warfare. Add to this that the hostile army was immensely superior in numbers, every sort of ground material and aeroplanes, and there is hardly a competent soldier who would have pledged his reputation that any but a very small proportion could escape.

Eighty per cent of the troops escaped and that argues three unchallengeable conclusions :

(1) Weakness in the German army during the critical phases of the operation.

(2) Remarkable skill on the part of the British commander.

(3) Notable steadiness and discipline on the part of the British Forces.

These are valuable and far-reaching points. This is the second occasion when the Germans have clashed with British troops in the best possible conditions for them and failed to crush or capture them. On this occasion it was only a small force.

Only 60,000 troops could be spared including one Australian and one New Zealand division. About half were British soldiers. This small body of men fought an almost continuous battle for over a fortnight against odds in numbers and material. On more than one occasion the Germans were brought to a standstill, sometimes for days at a time, by forces one fifth their number. They inflicted exemplary losses on the enemy, and themselves only suffered about 3,000 killed and wounded.

It is well to emphasise these points since the Germans are now about to develop their offensive in the Near East.

BRITISH FIGHTER COMMAND OPERATIONS.

WING COMMANDER FRASER'S REVIEW.

R. A. F. FIGHTERS NOW ON THE OFFENSIVE.

By

Wing Commander L. V. Fraser.

(A review of the British Fighter Command operations for the first three months of the year is now possible. It shows that the Fighter Command of the R. A. F. is taking the offensive against Germany after its great defensive victory of the Battle of Britain).

This offensive falls under four main heads. Two of these concern daylight operations: (1) Escorting bombers attack aerodromes and invasion ports, (2) Offensive patrols in which squadrons of fighters "beat up" enemy aerodromes, troop ships or any military objective they come across. They seek out the enemy.

Night operations on which the enemy is now relying for his chief air offensive are countered by the Fighter Command in two ways.

(a) Improved methods of interception resulting in a higher proportion of raiders destroyed. Everything points to the proportion growing.

(b) "Watch and wait" tactics by R. A. F. machines over aerodromes to which the enemy returns after his night raids.

Day patrol work continues normally and many enemy aircraft are shot down into the sea.

FIGURES OF LOSSES.

In the defence of Great Britain and in offensive operations by R. A. F. fighters during January, February and March, 155 enemy aircraft were destroyed—94 by fighters, 51 by anti-aircraft fire and ten by other means (including balloon barrage). R. A. F. losses were 41 aircraft, a higher percentage than during last summer, but this is an inevitable result of taking the offensive and is still very considerably less than enemy losses.

January was a quiet month, in which much bad weather often kept the forces of both sides on the ground. In February the pace quickened.

During March, when the period of the full moon was particularly bright the "bag" was 79, of which R. A. F. fighters claimed 51. On the night of March 13 night fighters made a record by shooting down 11 enemy raiders out of a total of 13 destroyed. On several occasions R. A. F. bombers have

crossed the Channel escorted by nearly 100 fighters. No determined opposition was encountered, and on one occasion attacks on Boulogne, Dunkirk and Calais resulted in "direct hits on all prescribed targets". The Germans are now experiencing the same sort of treatment which last year they used to mete out almost every day to the English side of the Channel.

Their counter-measures cannot compare with those of the R. A. F. Their fighters have never been able to deflect British bombers from their job ; instead many have been shot down by the R. A. F. escorts.

Offensive patrols too have been consistently successful. Carried out from low altitudes, often in the face of accurate and determined gunfire, they have sought out a variety of targets. Sometimes the pilot in an attacking patrol beat has come down almost to sea level to rake it with bullets. Aerodromes, troops, transport—every manifestation of enemy activity has received "attention".

WHAT THREE PILOTS DID.

As might be expected, the keen and daring pilots of the Allied air forces have found particular pleasure in such forays. Here is a brief account of what three of them did in their Hurricanes over Northern France one day in January.

One avoided two sections, each of three M. E. 109s, off the coast, dived on five M. E. 109s parked near the woods in the face of concentrated "flake" and sent their crews running for shelter, raked army lorries scattering their crews in the fields, attacked two machine-gun posts, and fired at barges.

The second came down through a cloud over an aerodrome, fired at two M. E. 109s taxi-ing to take off, and saw one topple over. He "held as long as possible" in his dive to the gun post so that he caught his wing on the protecting sandbags and had his windscreen splintered by the return fire, shot up safely to the clouds, came down again and spent his remaining bullets on a column of soldiers.

The third saw M. E. 109s dispersed among the trees, dived on them with guns blazing so low that the pilot came up straight through some high tension cables, and returned over the Channel with 25 yards of copper wire round his air screw and fuselage deadening his controls.

EFFECT OF NEW DEVELOPMENT.

German bomber crews having endured the perils of night fighter patrols, anti-aircraft fire and other defences—all of them increasingly dangerous—might be expected to breathe a sigh of relief when they come within sight of their home aerodromes. Instead it is now very probable that the fighter bombers of

the R. A. F. will be circling around on their tails with the express purpose of "pipping them on the post". This new development in the activities of the R. A. F. Fighter Command has met with considerable success, and it may well be assumed that the moral effect is even more damaging than the actual amount of destruction it causes.

On these night raids the R. A. F. pilots come down low in pursuit of enemy bombers just about to land. Some bombers have been destroyed in the air by machine-gun fire and others by bombs as they taxied in. Recent successes of anti-aircraft guns have brought their total "bag" for the war to over 500. During March they destroyed 22 raiders—20 of them at night. Their best nights were January 19, March 4 and March 12. On each of these nights they shot down four.

"FEED DESTROYERS TO BRITAIN."
AMERICAN COMMENTATOR'S PLEA.
HOW WAR COULD BE SHORTENED.

William Hart, the American economist and political commentator, in the ***Reader's Digest*** *which claims an international circulation of 4,250,000, discusses the U-boat campaign and the British shipping situation. He says :*

For our safety we need a winning Britain, and for our best interests we need a fast-winning Britain. What should we do ?

There are two alternatives:—

One is to pepper our coasts with new shipyards and start launching new merchant ships on a scale we reached during the last months of the last war.

But the Germans might get out more submarines. **If you have rats eating grain in a mill you do not try simply to produce more grain than the rats can eat. You try to kill the rats.**

That is what was done in the last war. Our new merchant ships did not win that war. It was won (so far as this present point is concerned) by destroyers. They learned how to kill the submarines.

Britain ended the last war with 435 destroyers. She now has approximately 220. And the job is much bigger than in 1918.

BRIAIN'S GIGANTIC TASK.

Now the submarines are reinforced by aerial spotters and the British blockade the shores of Europe all the way from Narvik in Norway to St. Jean de Luz at the frontier of Spain, a total of about 2,000 miles.

Towards the end of the last war Britain, besides her own 435 destroyers, had the co-operation of 229 others under American, French, Italian and Japanese flags.

These Allied destroyers helped to look after the Mediterranean and the Pacific ocean. Now with only 220 destroyers, the British besides patrolling the North Atlantic must themselves patrol the Mediterranean and the Pacific. It just cannot be effectively done. We come thus to the second alternative. **It is simply destroyers, more destroyers, and more and more destroyers.**

"HITLER MAY CALL IT WAR"

We have 159 destroyers in existence and an additional 205 in prospect. The only quick and sure way to shorten this war is to feed destroyers to the British as fast as we can build them.

Hitler may call it "war". What difference do his words make as long as the British stand between him and us? When we gave the British 50 more destroyers was it "war"? If we give them 50 more, then 50 more, and then 50 more, will it be "war"? Whatever it is that we are in, we are in it. Our only safety is to persevere in it to the finish. As I once heard Theodore Roosevelt say: "To start something and then go soft is one certain way to destruction".

We are in a situation to-day in which it is much more dangerous to go backwards than to go forwards.

The best chance of safety, therefore, is to push forward with speed and without stint. Build merchant ships, yes. But above all build destroyers, destroyers and destroyers.

AMERICAN PRESS COMMENTS ON THE WAR.

QUESTION OF THE WAR AIMS.

ADVICE TO EIREAN GOVERNMENT.

(The following is a summary of American press comments on the war for the period from April 12 to 17. They may be used as separate items at the discretion of editors.)

*The **Washington Merrygo** of April 13 wrote* :—

WITH a glint in his blue eyes the German-born Siegfried Bechhold says "We will win the war before this year is over", but when he says "We" he means Britain and the United States.

Bechhold is an American citizen and President of the Armoured Tank Corporation. He was born in Bavaria and lived in Germany until the age of 22.

Bechhold says :—"We will win the war because German morale will crack. I am a German and I know. They can't take it. The German people have been led to believe that their strength is invincible, that no foreign plane could ever appear over German territory. But British planes are flying over Germany every day now ; they will come in greater and greater numbers. The myth of a swift German victory over Britain is being broken, and a break in German morale will follow soon after."

SWEDISH ENGINEER'S STORY.

The New York Post of April 19 wrote :—

A Swedish Engineer, A. Anderson, who has made frequent business journeys in Norway during the German occupation, the most recent being in February, declares : "The German passenger steamer *Stuttgart* and other boats of the same class are being used by the Nazis as hospital ships. The *Stuttgart* reached Norway after the invasion and was still there when I left in February. I have made a few short trips to Stettin but have always returned immediately to Norwegian ports.

"Since I had business with the *Stuttgart* I know from personal observation that hospital trains filled with wounded German soldiers are still arriving daily from Bergen, Trondhjem and other northern cities. Since these trains are routed directly to the harbour, they cannot be observed by the public".

"You will get an idea of the number who are being killed or wounded by the irate Norwegian population when I tell you that the capacity of the

Akarshuis hospital in Oslo, the largest in the country, which had 1,000 beds before the war, has been enlarged by Germany, which requisitioned it to 2,000. It is still unable to take care of a large number of victims".

"In the large cemetery of Vinderen, a small town near Oslo, German soldiers are not given individual resting places. There are too many of them. Instead they are shovelled into a large mass of burial plots".

"Not all Germans are killed by the Norwegians. When visiting a German official stationed with a garrison of 4,000 soldiers at the Sala School in Oslo I saw a group of soldiers carrying out 14 large sacks. A few moments later another group similarly burdened appeared in the yards. The appearance of these burlap bags betrayed their contents immediately. A child could have seen that they were human bodies. I made careful enquiries and found that the garrison had been the scene of a furious battle between Austrian and German soldiers. Fighting continued between the two groups for days even after Austrian ringleaders had been court-martialled."

"WANT A WORLD WITHOUT HITLER".

*The **Saturday Evening Post** of April 12 wrote in an editorial:—*

"How we got into the war we shall not know entirely until we read history that is now hidden. We are in it. We are in it all together. Rightly we may say that we got into it and could have been got into it only because the great majority of us want one thing, no matter how violently we may have disagreed about the way of getting it. We want a world without Hitler. Here we hold with Mr. Winston Churchill, the mighty realist who is impatient with those who in the midst of battle clamour for a statement of war aims, a charter of the covenant, a blue print of the new order that is to come afterwards. One war aim is to destroy Hitler."

QUESTION OF IRISH BASES.

*The **New York Daily News** wrote on April 15:—*

"If the Germans attempt invasion of Ireland the Irish can hope to throw them back only with the help of the British Navy and big reinforcements from the British Army and North Ireland.

"The net result to the Irish people of a Hitler-conquest would be a Government 'Co-operating' with Hitler, about as poor as old Pétain co-operates in France. The kind of co-operation the Germans practise in conquered countries is based on the principle 'you give me your watch; I'll tell you the time'.

"We believe in sooth with the Irish in the United States, whose opinions swing great weight in Ireland, that it would be wise to get realistically behind the proposals for releasing Irish bases to the British soon. It would be a defence insurance for Irish democracy as well as British."

DIPLOMATIC SUMMARY.

GERMAN MACHINATIONS TO SECURE CONTROL OF WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN.

A FRESH AGREEMENT WITH RUSSIA?

The Times' Diplomatic Correspondent writes:—

THE onslaughts in Greece and North Africa and fiercer raids upon British homes are not the whole of the German spring offensive. On either flank of the Eastern Mediterranean military drive, the German Foreign Office is developing a diplomatic drive—first in Spain, then (not so far advanced yet) Turkey and Soviet Russia. On the strength of their military successes German diplomatists are trying, like astute stock-brokers to sell German shares on a good market. Now is the time, they are saying, for a closer agreement with Germany.

The Spanish Cabinet have met several times, twice late at night, during the past few days. These meetings would pass without notice if German diplomatists and members of the Spanish Falange Party were not spreading whispers. Spain, they say, is about to join the Three Power Pact. All that was said officially after the meeting was that "the Foreign Minister has made a statement on various aspects of the international situation in relation to the important military and diplomatic happenings of the present war."

Falange newspapers, however, maintain their vindictive tone against Great Britain and promise speedy expansion of Spanish territory oversea. Under pressure from Germany themselves they try to pass on pressure to Portugal. The *Arriba* declares that Portugal must cut away from her British alliance and join wholeheartedly in a pan-Iberian policy in harmony with the "New Order."

Many signs go to show that the Germans are making a fresh bid for Spanish co-operatien while keeping steady pressure on Vichy (which has obediently left the League of Nations) and sending more of their highly technical tourists to French North Africa. The German aim is to secure greater control of the Western Mediterranean shores by trickery while trying to get control of the Eastern Mediterranean by force. They boast of being able soon to close both entrances to Gibraltar and the Suez.

The Spanish people have certainly no wish to be used like the Italians to be at German beck and call. In this country we have confidence in the growing strength of British forces by land, sea and air in the Mediterranean. But it is well to know the German plans for what they are.

In Berlin two re-called ambassadors, von Papen from Ankara and von Schulenburg from Moscow, are receiving their instructions on German policy to be pursued in Eastern Europe. German propagandists are still saying that Turkey will be asked to sign a non-aggression pact with Germany. The Germans had clearly hoped that Rashid Ali's *coup d'état* in Iraq on Turkey's south-eastern frontier would make the Turks nervous of their own safety. The arrival of British troops in Iraq and Rashid Ali's assurances of loyalty to the British alliance have done much to remove anxiety, but it is evident that the Germans are still hoping to dupe the cautious Turks. The Turkish newspaper *Tan* sharply objects to reports of an impending non-aggression pact, wisely adding that it is simply a German manoeuvre to placate Turkey " which must always be vigilant and face all that may come to pass."

German tricks and threats in Turkey are likely to be intensified, for an acquiescent Turkey, (now far from acquiescent with her eyes firmly on her Thracian defences) would give Germany a route to the Middle Eastern oil fields.

About Soviet Russia German propaganda sharply varies in the usual way according to its intended audience. In Northern and Central Europe the Germans say they are soon going to attack Russia. In Turkey and Bulgaria they say that Russia is about to attack Turkey. Certainly there is in Berlin a large school advocating an attack upon Russia fairly soon. Hitler probably lets them talk in the hope that Moscow will hear and hasten to give Germany further economic concessions by way of averting the evil day. Both in Berlin and in Moscow it is generally expected that von Der Schulenburg will return to Moscow with an offer of a fresh agreement. German desire for Soviet raw material will increase sharply as American supplies reach British forces both direct across the Atlantic and through the Red Sea.

The *Pravda* confirms for the first time officially old reports that Germany had asked Moscow to join in the "New Order" in November 1940 (presumably while M. Molotov was in Berlin). It was suggested that the Soviet Union should join the Three Power Pact making it a four power pact. The Soviet Government did not at that time think it was possible to accept the proposals.

The truth is that there has been a lot of bargaining in the past between Berlin and Moscow and there is likely to be more in the future.

GERMANY'S REPORTED REFUSAL TO SPAIN.

TRANSPORT THROUGH UNOCCUPIED FRANCE.

FIRST TIME HITLER HAS USED BLOCKADE AS WEAPON.

Martin Moore cabled to the **Daily Telegraph** *from Lisbon on April 27:*

Germany is now putting economic pressure on Spain in an attempt to force her consent to a policy of full co-operation.

The latest move is a refusal to grant a permit for the transport through unoccupied France of an important commercial consignment from a central European country.

This consignment has already been bought and paid for by the Spanish Government. I am unable to disclose its precise nature, but its delivery is vital to the economic life of Spain.

Though I have direct knowledge of only this one consignment, there can be little doubt that other Continental imports into Spain are also falling under the German ban or will do so unless the Spanish Government yields.

Significant of the urgency of Hitler's present demands is that this is the first time he has used the blockade as a weapon.

Hitherto the economic argument by which he has attempted to persuade Spain has been merely the assertion that Germany is able to supply the country with enough food to compensate for what would be lost by breaking with Britain. This argument, however, has not carried much weight.

SENOR SUNER'S ATTITUDE.

The present method of economic pressure has certainly been applied by the Germans with the full knowledge, possibly even at the instigation, of Senor Suner, the pro-Nazi Spanish Foreign Minister. His German leaning is so strong that he has been consistently opposed to the acceptance of Anglo-American supplies.

I now learn that at the Cabinet meeting when the latest British credit was discussed, Senor Suner, in the face of all his colleagues, declared his opposition on the ground that it would compromise Spanish foreign policy, which is his own policy of fullest co-operation with Germany.

MINISTER'S THREAT TO RESIGN.

He might have carried the day had not Senor Carceller, Minister for Commerce, threatened to resign if the Government refused British help without which the country would starve.

General Franco, who is determined at all costs to preserve the outward unity of the Government, thereupon overruled Suner.

While the serious nature of the latest German pressure on Spain is undeniable, it shows that the Nazi demand is so far still being resisted by General Franco, his War Minister, General Varella and other members of the Government who believe that military co-operation with the Axis would be disastrous.

Taken in conjunction with the Cabinet clash over the British loan, it indicates that Suner's ascendancy is not yet complete.

GERMANS' PROBLEMS IN WESTERN DESERT.
DIFFERENT FROM ITALIANS' POSITION LAST YEAR.
HOW COMMONWEALTH FORCES REGARD PROSPECT.

DEFENCES GREATLY STRENGTHENED.

Arthur Merton cabled to the ***Daily Telegraph*** *from the Western Desert on May 4.*

WHEN the actual German advance took place the Cyrenaican countryside was laid waste. At Benghazi and Sollum petrol dumps were blown up, stores burned and everything that could possibly be useful to the Axis army was put out of action.

As a result the German advance, in comparison with the Italian efforts, labours under a great disadvantage, all facilities the latter enjoyed regarding military stores and water supplies having disappeared.

The Germans are being compelled to bring practically all their fuel, munitions and food they need from Europe, only after which these can be landed at Tripoli and Benghazi.

Tripoli is so far removed from the operations area—it is nearly 1,000 miles from Sollum—that for all practical purposes Benghazi is Germany's only channel of importation.

The incessant attacks the R. A. F. is making on the port and the two aerodromes that serve the town are rapidly putting it out of action for the reception of both sea-borne and air-borne supplies.

Incidentally the Germans are no longer using the inland desert route for the transport of supplies.

"NOT AN ENJOYABLE EXCURSION."

This means they must bring what they can by troop-carrying planes and the rest by the coastal road, which is exposed to attack by the navy in addition to the R. A. F.

The Germans are notoriously fond of excursions. One has seen how they enjoyed in Greece, Italy and the Rhineland, but the Germans in Libya are by no means enjoying the desert excursion on which their Fuehrer has sent them.

They have been greatly inconvenienced by the sandstorms and the heat has been by no means pleasant, while both temperature and climatic conditions are daily becoming more irritating.

There are also complaints in half finished letters found with prisoners of the lack of water, unpalatable food, bombing and machine-gunning from the air and shelling from the sea to which they are incessantly exposed.

One prisoner was so affected by his experiences that he dramatically wrote: "If ever I get out of this hell, I will devote my life to God".

WHAT AUSTRALIAN TROOPS SAY.

I was particularly impressed by the Australians in the main defended position. They know well that their present enemy is of a very different calibre from their former opponent in this area.

They have made the closest examination of the defence line which they will be called upon to man if any big-scale attack materialises. They found it amazingly strong and since they have added immensely to its strength.

As one of them said to me deep down in the bowels of the earth where his "watch-hole" is: "We are unperturbed by what we hear about the Jerries. Let them come and try conclusions with us. They will crack their skulls on these defences and be sorry for themselves."

During the last campaign there was little or nothing in the way of defences. Now the defence works are very considerable and there are equally extensive anti-aircraft positions.

This may reflect the recognition that the enemy to-day is more determined and enterprising than the enemy of a year ago. At the same time it demonstrates how alive the High Command is to what might be called possibilities.

Evidence of the preparations made should inspire the greatest confidence of the Commonwealth forces' capacity to meet any emergency that may arise.

Again the position regarding material and men is vastly different to-day from what it was last June. Few realise with what a small army and still smaller air force General Wavell and Air Chief Marshal Longmore routed immensely superior Italian forces.

Our Air Force now in Egypt is not only many times more numerous but its speed, armament and bomb-carrying capacity are infinitely superior.

The military forces which we dispose are also far superior in numbers and equipment to what we had at the time of the invasion of Cyrenaica.

The successful conclusion of the East African campaign and the withdrawal with such relatively small loss of the expeditionary force from Greece have added tens of thousands of men and vast quantities of material to the Desert force and the forces guarding the Middle East as a whole.

Examples of Misleading Statements in Enemy Broadcasts to India and the Near East for the period May 12—18, 1941.

A.—BROADCASTS IN ENGLISH.

BRITISH AND GERMAN AIR LOSSES.

As was pointed out in this report lastweek, Dr. Goebbels had recently been suspiciously silent regarding German air losses in Western Europe, including Britain. On May 12, however, Berlin came out with a statement that whereas the British lost 36 aircraft between May 9 and May 11, only 18 German machines were lost in that period. **In actual fact, from dawn on May 9 to the small hours following midnight on May 11, Britain lost only 16 planes (20 less than the Germans claimed), while the Nazis lost 58, exactly 40 more than they admitted.**

Inadvertently, however, Berlin let slip the real truth two days previously when Walt Mittler, one of their aeronautical commentators, remarked: "The British claim to have inflicted very heavy losses on German bombers recently, **and it would be very silly of me to quarrel over the numbers that have actually been shot down by the British**".

THOSE TERRITORIAL CLAIMS AGAIN.

An article in the *Boersen-Zeitung*, quoted by the German wireless on May 12 is at great pains to stress the fact that Germany has "no territorial claims" in the Balkans. This in itself is a most ominous statement, and the peoples of

the Balkans may well feel perturbed, for it is part of Hitler's time-worn technique to disavow all intentions of annexation just before springing on his prey.

It will be remembered that, despite frequent declarations that he had no more territorial claims after the Austrian Anschluss, **Hitler proceeded to annex parts of Czechoslovakia, half of Poland, the whole of Alsace and Lorraine, and the districts of Eupen and Malmedy in Belgium.** Bulgaria and Hungary, too, are to all intents and purposes parts of the Great German Reich, while Rumania has been carved up without scruple to feed the greed of Hitler's flunkey-neighbours. The new ' independent " state of Croatia, which has (for form's sake) been presented with a puppet king from the Italian Royal House, is obviously designed to become an economic adjunct not of Italy, but of Germany herself.

B.—BROADCASTS IN ASIATIC LANGUAGES.

RAIDS OVER BRITAIN.

Dr. Goebbels' Hindustani and Persian broadcasters of May 16, went out of their way to quote a vague Stockholm report which, according to the Nazis, stated that British statesmen were becoming " confused " over the immense destruction caused in Britain. Actually it was the Swedish paper *Svenska Dagbladet* which recently published a message from their London correspondent. This communication reads as follows :—" According to my observations **the German need 100 years to reduce the industrial capacity of England** even if they go on bombing at the same rate as now. The bombing of the business centres and industrial quarters only strengthens the British in their efforts to bear any sacrifice that the war may be won ".

COLD STEEL.

On May 16, Berlin's Hindustani broadcast painted a lurid picture of increasing strikes in the U.S.A. and in particular, mentioned that 35,000 workers in the General Motors' Company had gone on strike. Actually the difference between the management and the workers of the General Motors has been amicably settled. And as for the general industrial position in the U. S. A. despite Nazi activities, the country is producing steel faster than all the steel mills of Germany and the most powerful 35,000-ton battleship of the U. S. A. the *Washington*, **has been commissioned six months ahead of the schedule.**

NAZIS AND MUSLIMS.

The Nazis are so hard pressed to invent stories of Arab discontent against the British in Palestine that their Hindustani and Arabic broadcasts of May 13, had to quote reports from Uruguay—in South America, 7,000 miles from

Palestine—alleging intensification of R. A. F. attacks on Palestine. **Inasmuch as the R. A. F. has not attacked Palestine at all, there can be no question of their intensifying these so-called raids.**

Similarly, in their broadcasts of May 17, the Nazis talked of the British atrocities in Palestine, and also quoted the Muslim leader of Croatia as saying that a brilliant future awaited the Muslims under Hitler. It will be recalled that despite differences with the British the Palestinians decided to co-operate in defeating the common enemy. The *Palestine* declard: "The Arabs now set aside their local issues in order to play their role in this world conflict, cherishing the hope that when justice emerges victorious they will be adequately rewarded for their loyalty." And as for the Muslim future under the Axis, the Muslims have only to remember the Italian policy towards Libya, Albania and Abyssinia. As against this black record of the Axis is the British record. **Egypt, Iraq, Transjordania, Saudi Arabia, which in 1914 were all subject countries, are now either independent States or far on the way to independence.**

A GERMAN BLUNDER.

The Nazis' Hindustani and Persian broadcasts of May 13 vaguely referred to a despatch from Ankara stating that Britain's so-called defeat in Greece had made a deep inpression. Turkey's reaction to the German war on the Balkans was far from complimentary to the German leaders. The Turkish paper *Cumhuriyet* observed: "Germany has brought the war to the Balkans because she knows that she cannot defeat the British people. **Every German who dies, every German aircraft which is shot down, every German bullet which is fired during German attacks against Yugoslavia and Greece will constitute a loss for Germany on the front of the British Isles, where the decisive issue of the war will be fought."**

PROGRAMME OF LECTURES

OF THE

Pudukkottai State War Information Bureau.

1941—

LECTURE XLVI.

May	...31, Saturday ...	Town Hall	...	6.30 p. m.
June	...1, Sunday ...	Nirpalani	...	6.00 p. m.
		Avoor	...	6.30 p. m.
	2, Monday ...	Karayur	...	6.00 p. m.
		Keelathaniam	...	6.30 p. m.
	3, Tuesday ...	Andakkulam	...	6.00 p. m.
		Killanur	...	6.30 p. m.
	4, Wednesday	Narthamalai	...	6.00 p. m.
		Uppiliakkudi	...	6.30 p. m.
	5, Thursday ...	Semmattividuthi	...	6.00 p. m.
		Malayur	...	6.30 p. m.
	6, Friday ...	Konnayur	...	6.00 p. m.
		Mela Vegupatti	...	6.30 p. m.

LECTURE XLVII.

	7, Saturday ...	Town Hall	...	6.30 p. m.
	8, Sunday ...	Thiruvarangulam	...	6.00 p. m.
		Vamban	...	6.30 p. m.
	9, Monday ...	Kulavoipatti	...	6.00 p. m.
		Kilayur (south)	...	6.30 p. m.
	10, Tuesday ...	Vellanur	...	6.00 p. m.
		Puthambur	...	6.30 p. m.
	11, Wednesday	Melur	...	6.00 p. m.
		Pillamangalam	...	6.30 p. m.
	12, Thursday ...	Kadayakkudi	...	6.00 p. m.
		Mirattunilai	...	6.30 p. m.
	13, Friday ...	Odukkur	...	6.00 p. m.
		Nanguppatti	...	6.30 p. m.

SUPPORT
THE STATE WAR EFFORT

BY TAKING TICKETS IN THE

GREAT WAR FUND RAFFLE

Conducted by
The State War Fund Entertainments Committee,
with the authority and under the auspices of the Darbar

CLOSING DATE 15-6-41 ∙ DRAW ON 23-6-41

BIG MONEY FOR LUCKY WINNERS
ON
HIS HIGHNESS THE RAJA'S BIRTHDAY

300 PRIZES

1st	PRIZE	Rs.	7,500	
2nd	PRIZE	,,	5,000	
3rd	PRIZE	,,	2,500	
2.	PRIZES	,,	1,000	each.
5	,,	,,	500	,,
90	,,	,,	100	,,
100	,,	,,	50	,,
100	,,	,,	15	,,

Sri Brihadamba State Press, Pudukkottai. 1,000—31-5-41.